

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny Hoyer released the following statement today in honor of the significant accomplishments of NASA and the Goddard Space Flight Center located in Greenbelt, Maryland, specifically in commemoration of the anniversaries of the first lunar landing and the foundation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

“Thirty-five years ago today, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon in a monumental event televised across the nation. Launched from Cape Kennedy on the morning of July 16, 1969, the Eagle lunar module carrying Armstrong and Aldrin landed on the moon four days later.

“Throughout the Apollo 11 voyage, systems engineers at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt controlled the tracking network, while colleagues at NASA's mission control in Houston corresponded with the astronauts.

“As NASA's first space flight center, Goddard Space Flight Center was established less than one year after the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) became an official federal agency on July 29, 1958. In addition to its imperative role in the first lunar landing, Goddard is a world class facility whose work over the last 50 years has led to a number of important scientific discoveries and has made significant contributions to the NASA space program and is essential both as a national research facility and as a regional employer.

“Goddard Space Flight Center is a world class center and home to a major U.S. laboratory for developing and operating unmanned scientific spacecraft. Goddard also manages and operates the Hubble Space Telescope which plays a unique role in broadening our scientific understanding of the observable universe.

“As we celebrate the 35th anniversary of the first moon walk, and look to the upcoming 50th anniversaries of NASA and the Goddard Space Flight Center, it is important to recognize the significant scientific and technological achievements. We must also continue to invest in the momentum of space exploration and discovery conducted at this research facility. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make sure that Goddard and Hubble are adequately funded and supported.”

In recognition of the achievements of NASA and Goddard Space Flight Center, last week Congressman Hoyer supported a bill celebrating the 50th anniversary of NASA and the Jet

Propulsion Laboratory in 2008. The bill will issue a commemorative coin for the historic anniversary and the proceeds from the surcharges will go to the NASA Family Assistance Fund, which provides financial assistance to the families of NASA personnel who die while on the job.

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